

supported by the shoe so that friction between the shoe and the abutment will cause the feedstock to extrude through a die supported in the shoe. The method comprises the steps of sensing the actual shape and size of a gap between the wheel and the shoe and comparing the actual size of the gap with a predetermined or previous gap size in a control device to determine if there is a difference. The control device responds to a difference to control a support structure which supports at least one of the shoe and the wheel in the chassis to displace at least one of the shoe and the wheel on at least one axis perpendicular to the axis of rotation of the wheel so that the gap is changed to reduce the difference. The support mechanism is then adjusted to displace the shoe relative to the wheel in each of two mutually perpendicular directions whereby the size and shape of the gap can be altered during operation.

Such a method is neither shown nor remotely suggested in the prior art as already recognized by the Examiner. Specifically, the Examiner recognized that Nagai in view of Miyazaki does not disclose a sensing means. Further, the sensing means of Pinomaa senses a shoe position in relation to a wheel, not the actual shape of a gap between the wheel and the shoe. The Examiner also recognized that the prior art does not disclose the adjusting of a support mechanism to displace the shoe relative to the wheel in each of two mutually perpendicular directions whereby the size and shape of the gap can be altered during operation.

Accordingly, the references cited by the Examiner fail to teach or suggest all the limitations of claim 13, as amended, and, consequently, this claim is now in condition for allowance. Claim 14 has been cancelled without prejudice. As to claims dependent from claim 13, these claims merely further patentably define the subject matter of their parent claim. For at least this reason, claims 15-17 are also patentable over the cited references.

CONCLUSION

For the reasons detailed above, it is respectfully submitted that all claims remaining in the application (Claims 1-13 and 15-17) are now in condition for allowance. The foregoing comments do not require unnecessary additional search or examination.

In the event the Examiner believes a telephone call would expedite prosecution, he is invited to call the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

FAY, SHARPE, FAGAN,
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18 Oct 2004
Date

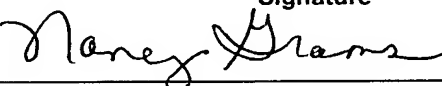
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